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MENTAL AND MORAL SCIENCE;

WITH SOME REMARKS UPON

HYSTERICAL MANIA

BY

HENRY HOWARD, M.D., M.R.C.S., ENG.

MEDICAL ATTENDANT, LONGUE POINTE LUNATIC ASYLUM.

*READ BEFORE THE MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY OF MONTREAL.*

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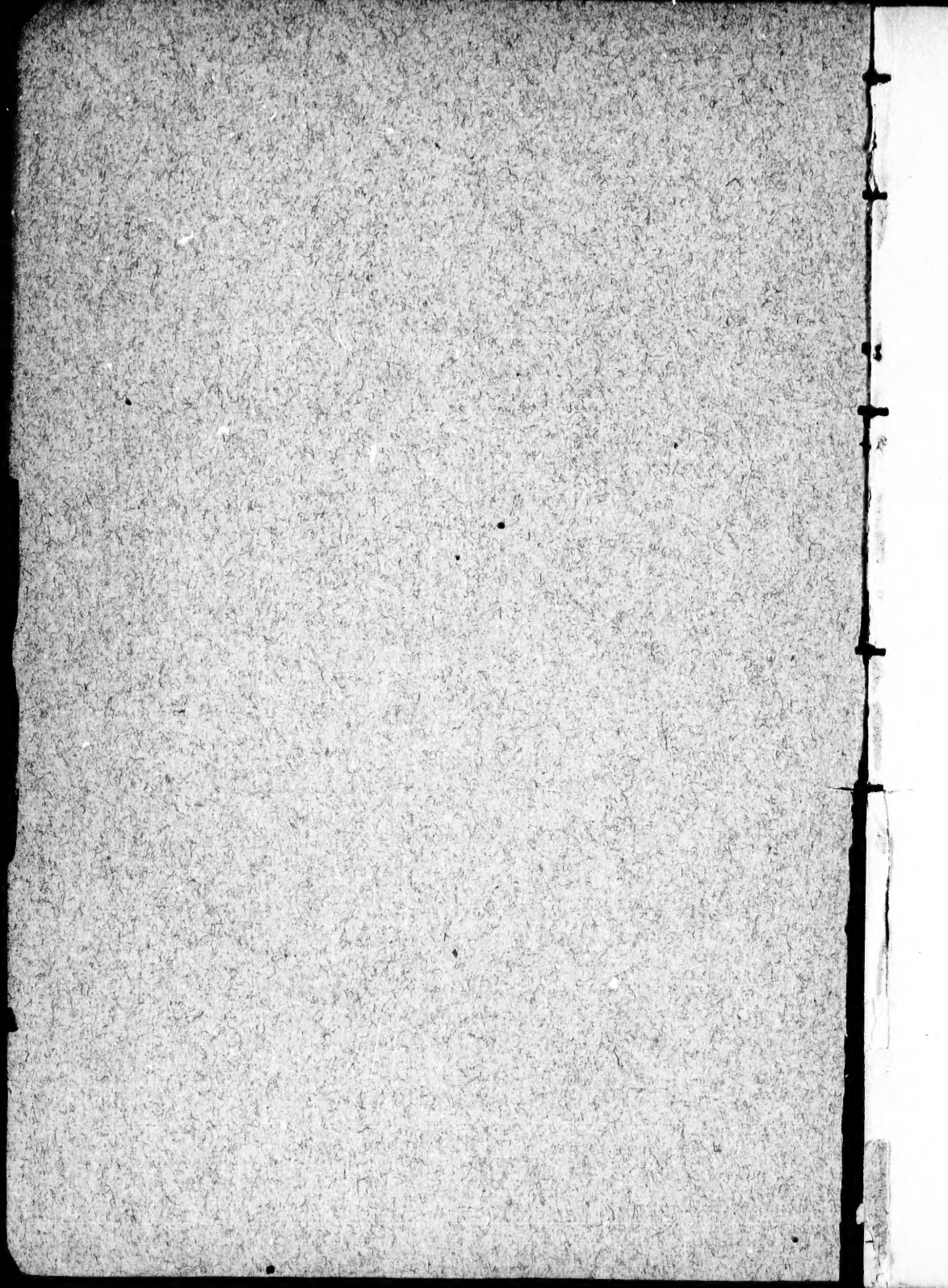
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MR PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:—In reading Dr. Newman's "Grammar of Assent," I met with the following passage: "It has always appeared to me that treating on the science of religion was in one particular like treating on mental and moral science; every man can only speak for himself; and for himself every man has the right to speak; and he adds, that under such circumstances egotism is true modesty." I was glad when I found this statement made by such an authority; for I often felt ashamed of my egotism but could not see how I was to avoid it.

You all know, as well as I can tell you, that it is nearly impossible, in the present day, to take up a work on mental and moral science; or read even an article in a journal on these sciences and not find it set forth, either directly or indirectly, that the Christian moral law was opposed to the natural law, and I am free to confess to you that very frequently I thought, myself, that both laws were irreconcilable, yet I always felt that this must be impossible, as God was the author of both laws. I could not rest satisfied in this state of doubt, and so I determined to work out the problem, at least to my own satisfaction; and I shall endeavour this evening to prove to you that these laws are not opposed, and that the apparent irreconcilability has been due to many causes.

One great cause is that we are not, in all cases, certain that

what we call a natural law is a natural law, and sometimes what we suppose, or wish to be, a natural law of our being, is nothing more than what is due to some *abnormal* state of our mental organization, whether that abnormal state be hereditary, or due to some accidental cause occurring after birth.

It is not for us as scientists to go into the question of the origin of evil, and I suspect if we did we would not make much of it. That evil exists, we know, and like everything else that does exist in the finite must have had a beginning; our simple duty, I take it, is to deal with it as we find it existing in man, and we may assume that if it never had a beginning, and did not continue to exist there never would have been any occasion for a moral law; the natural law would have been all-sufficient for man, if there was no evil in his organisation; but as we are, so to speak, such a compound of good and evil, a moral law became actually necessary for our guidance, and he who gave the natural law, was, in justice, obliged to give a moral law in man's altered condition, but then he could not give one law in opposition to the one he had already given. That we are composed of good and evil requires no proof from me; every man knows it of himself; every man knows that he is, as it were, a double, one good and one evil, contending each against the other. Every man feels the same as St. Paul did when he said: "When I would do *good* evil is present with me." True, it is, that the evil, that is the criminal neurosis, in some is greater than in others, therefore it is that we form such unjust judgments of each other.

Another cause of this apparent irreconcilability between the natural and the moral laws, is due to the fact, that no matter how ignorant a man may be of natural laws, nearly every man fancies that he is capable of explaining and expounding the moral law; consequently there have been and are, a thousand different sorts of moral laws floating throughout the world. Some naturalists have taken advantage of this anomalous state of affairs, because it suited their card, to condemn the whole moral law, and by their absurd proceedings have succeeded in getting up a cry against mental and moral science, as danger-

ous to morals, so that men, from whom we should expect better things, talk such nonsense as to warn their hearers to guard against *evil* science, forgetting, or not knowing, that science is truth, and that which is not truth is not science. There is no manner of doubt, but that there have appeared amongst the naturalists men of much more scientific knowledge than amongst the moralists—in fact the naturalists are all men of science—whereas the majority of the would-be moralists know nothing whatever of science. Indeed, very many of them are not aware that the knowledge of the moral law is as much a science as is the knowledge of the natural law, and that no man is capable of teaching either of these laws without a knowledge of both ; and the man who attempts to do so, only succeeds in rendering himself ridiculous to his intelligent hearers.

There is no man living that knows all the natural laws, for nature has not yet unfolded all her grand secrets, nor will she do so except to the hard-working, persevering scientist. But of these we do know we have sad experience every day, that no man can break them and not suffer dire consequences. Therefore, it behoves us to well consider if there is any moral law claiming our obedience, the acceptance of which would cause us to break the natural law.

Of course in this paper, upon mental and moral science, I have only to deal with these natural laws which directly are borne upon by the teachings of the moral law.

Let us see what these are :

First, it is a natural law for every human being to recognise and believe in the supernatural. I need not go into proofs for it is an established fact, that no peoples have ever yet been discovered, that did not recognise the supernatural,—all, in some way, recognise the supernatural—that it is a power, not of, but greater than man, a power that controlled, not only man, but all the universe. There is no moral law, that I ever heard of, opposed to this natural law.

*Self-preservation* is a great natural law ; indeed it has always been called the first law of nature. Is there any moral law opposed to it ? None that I know of. On the contrary, the

moral law supports to the full th's natural law. But, says the casuist, what of the Christian martyrs, why did they break the natural law, in obedience to a moral law and give up their lives? The answer is very simple; they actually obeyed the natural law of self-preservation, for in giving themselves up to a temporal death, it was with the belief that they preserved to themselves everlasting life. But there is a moral law that says, "Thou shalt not steal," and to steal, is take of that which is not thine, but the property of another. How about the man who *must* steal, or die of starvation? Which of the laws is he to break? neither; in this case the moral law of "Thou shalt not steal." is not applicable to him, morally speaking. The starving man who *cannot* otherwise obtain food is perfectly justified in taking it from wherever he can obtain it. Our Saviour himself gave us an example in this when his disciples plucked the ears of corn belonging to another, and ate the grains; not, mind you, because that they were starving, but simply that they were hungry. And it is a remarkable fact that his enemies did not accuse them of theft, but that they broke the Sabbath, as if a hungry man should not eat on the Sabbath as well as upon any other day. Of course, as God, he had the right to take of that which was his own, for all and everything was his; but he was then acting as man; moreover his accusers only looked upon him as a man.

But the moral law says: "Thou shalt not kill," and it very frequently occurs that a man must kill to save his own life; and under such circumstances killing is perfectly justifiable. So there is no moral law contrary to the natural law of self-preservation.

Procreation is a natural law, from man down through the whole animal and vegetable creation, it is actually necessary for the perpetuation of all things. And in all things we find, that like produces like, kind produces kind in all things, any difference that may exist it is only in degree not in kind, that is, instead of being normal it is abnormal.

Is there any law opposed to this natural law, of procreation, I mean any moral law opposed to it? I know of none. The

moral law does not make it obligatory upon all men, but leaves man what he is according to natural law, a free agent, to either procreate or abstain from procreation if he so pleases. The moral law, it is true, confines man within certain bounds, as to procreation; it does not allow him to procreate like the lower order of animals, for many scientific reasons. First, a man to procreate in this manner would eventually destroy his health, and thus break a natural law, by being the cause of his own death, or if he should have been born with an insane neurosis his life of debauchery would render him a lunatic. Every alienist knows that excessive sexual indulgence has more to do in filling up lunatic asylums than any other cause, save the one of self-pollution. Again, such unlawful procreation is injurious to the welfare of the state, for it would destroy family, and family ties, and the love of offspring, two natural laws which are the very safeguard of society. Consequently the moral law of monogamy is in perfect accord with the natural law; whereas polygamy is not only a breach of the moral, but a breach of the natural law. As I have already said the moral law is not opposed to the natural law of procreation, but it does not make it obligatory upon all; it leaves a man free to marry and procreate, or, if he so pleases, to remain a celibate, and celibacy, we know, is not injurious to a man either mentally or morally.

I know that many sentimental writers, judging of others by themselves, conceive that it is impossible that anyone could lead a life of chastity and purity, but these writers forget, or do not know, that men differ as much in their mental organization as they do in their personal appearance, and what would be impossible for one would be quite possible for another. In fact, these writers do not know that sexual desire is dependent upon a man's cerebellum, as much as his honesty is dependent upon the state of his parietal cells, or his wisdom upon his frontal.

One great standpoint taken by those who are opposed to celibacy, is hysterical mania. They assume that this fearful disease is due to sexual desire, and I can well excuse many who have seen the actions, and heard the language of these insane crea-

tures, mistaking *effect* for *cause*. Hysterical mania is not caused by sexual desire, but their terrible sexual desire is caused by their insanity; some disordered state of the digestive or uterine organs, producing irritation of some part of the ganglionic system, causes hysteria, which is followed by irritation of the cerebellum, producing moral insanity, which develops itself in strong sexual desire, in time this irritation spreads to the cells of the cerebrum, and the consequence is violent mania: a mania which renders these poor *erotic* creatures so disgusting to attendants by their vile language and unchaste actions. And, gentlemen, let me tell you that above all cases that can come under the treatment of the medical attendant of a lunatic asylum, hysterical mania gives him the greatest amount of trouble. Again, with regard to those who, writing upon hysterical mania, mistake effect for cause, they write as if ignorant of the fact, that the impure female who gratifies her desires by leading a life of impurity, is as frequently the victim of hysterical mania as is the chaste female who does not break the moral law. Moreover, married women and mothers very frequently are the victims of hysterical mania. I have at this moment four married women, mothers, hysterical maniacs; one of whom was placed under my care by my friend Dr. Reddy.

In justice to you and myself, I cannot conclude this part of my subject without alluding to the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. I would simply say that the Catholic Church does not oppose the natural law of marriage and procreation; on the contrary, she raises marriage to the dignity of a sacrament, and, as I have already shown, she is purely scientific in approving and sanctioning monogamy, and opposing her moral force to polygamy. She calls upon no man or woman to remain unmarried and lead a life of celibacy; but that if they remain unmarried they shall lead a life of chastity and purity. And in this also she is perfectly in accord with the natural law. True, that the Catholic Church leaves every man free to marry, or not to marry, and, for what she conceives to be wise reasons, chooses her priesthood from those who choose a life of celibacy, but then there is no obligation upon any man to become a priest; every man doing so enters that calling with his own free will.

With regard to females who chose a celibate life, the Catholic Church simply provides that those who do not wish to remain old maids in society, can join a religious community, either as teachers, or for the purpose of nursing and taking care of the sick and poor. I would not insult your intelligence by making an apology for these remarks, for you all know well that I have made them in the cause of scientific truth, and to prove that there was no moral law against the natural law of procreation.

*Love of offspring* is a natural law. I believe no one pretends to say the moral law is opposed to it.

Love of persons, love of freedom, love of knowledge, love of happiness, love of justice and ambition, are all natural laws, and all morally lawful when guided by reason and kept within proper bounds; because if not guided by reason and kept within proper bounds we would be breaking other natural laws. For example, if a man's ambition would lead him to neglect his family and injure his own health, he would be guilty of a breach of both the natural and moral law.

*Fear, envy, jealousy, hatred, revenge*, are those natural to man, can they be called natural laws? I do not believe they can. I believe these characteristics in man are the result of an abnormal mental organization, hereditary, and generally intensified by false teachings of the moral and natural laws.

I think I have now disposed of all the strongest standpoints taken by those who wish to make it appear that to obey the moral law would, in many instances, be to break the natural; and, as on purely scientific grounds, there is no profession so interested in the natural and moral laws as is the members of the medical profession: for our whole science is founded upon natural laws, it is well that we should know that we cannot err morally when we are acting in accordance to natural laws.

But it is well that, as far as it is possible, we should make ourselves sure that we are obeying the natural law; for notwithstanding the great advancement that has been made in medical and surgical science, more particularly within the last quarter of a century, we must all, to a very great degree, plead ignorance of natural laws, and that, consequently, we do not realize

the terrible consequence of their breach. We know, for example, that gout, cancer, phthisis, insanity, good and evil come to those that possess them by inheritance, but we never think of asking ourselves the question, are these things the result of breaches of natural laws by our progenitors? We act as if it were quite natural that such should be the case, and that there was no possibility of escaping from them. Most certainly there is no possibility of our escaping from what we already possess. But, then, can we not do something to guard future generations? Can we not give scientific proof to the drunkard and profligate, that his offspring will inherit his vices? Can we not give scientific proof to the married woman that her child's mental organization will depend very much on what her life is while carrying that child in her womb, and the nurturing and training of it after she has given it birth? Can we not daily impress upon teachers that there can be no system of teaching applicable to all mental organizations, and that what is healthy mental food for one is death to the other? Can we not impress upon these would-be moral teachers, that their teachings are driving people to the lunatic asylums, and can we not, at least, make some effort to convince society that no man is capable of teaching the moral law unless upon scientific grounds. And that if he pretends to teach the moral law he must know something, at least, of the natural law. I do not mean that every man is to go to work and learn mental and moral sciences, no more than that every man should learn practical astronomy; but mental and moral science should be so kept before society that all would understand it, at least as well as they do astronomy. The most illiterate man knows that the world is round, that it turns upon its own axis; that although the sun appears to move, rising in the east and setting in the west, that yet it is a fixed body and does not move at all. But the same man does not know that the bad drainage in his house, and the damp in his cellar, has caused the death of his wife and children; he does not know that air and light are necessary for health; he does not know that darkness and impure air will so destroy the mental organization as to render man an imbecile. Such a man will

tell you that his wife and children died because it was the will of God, as if God specially willed their death. Tell such a man that it was the will of God, just so far, and no farther, than that he had established irrevocable, unchangeable natural laws, and that no man can break these laws and not suffer dire consequences,—twenty chances to one but that the man would think you were speaking blasphemy,—and he would go to some moralist and report what you said, who in turn would be warned against you as a dangerous man. When I see an old person die out calmly and quietly, without pain or suffering, I can well understand that they are dying in obedience to natural law and according to the will of God. But when I see infants, children, and young persons dying, I say it is because of some breach of natural law, either on the part of the person or through the fault of their progenitors, whether through ignorance or otherwise. I might be as well told that the farmer that neglected to cultivate his land had bad crops by the will of God, and that the house burned down by an incendiary was the will of God also. Therefore, I hold that it is the duty of every conscientious medical man to take every opportunity he possibly can to impress these scientific truths upon society. But the fact is we have much to learn ourselves, and there will always be something still more to learn no matter how much we may know. The present generation knows more than the past, and the next generation will know more than we do; and so will truth advance till science must be recognised as the true basis of civilization. And when I say science, I speak particularly of mental and moral science. Yet, I would not have you understand that in these remarks I exclude religion; on the contrary, I do not believe these sciences can be taught except in connection with religion. The natural and moral laws are truly religious subjects, and as scientific as they are religious. Therefore, as science is *truth*, and religion *truth*, science and religion is one and the same. So no religion can be true that cannot bear the test of science.

I said as medical men we had much to learn scientifically, and I now state what I conceive we most require, is a better

knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and pathology. Fortunately for us all, we have many men, experts, devoting themselves, with praiseworthy efforts, to the study of these particular subjects. The hard-working microscopist is demonstrating to us, every day, something new : something that we did not know before in the anatomy of the brain and its appendages, and in the anatomy of the ganglionic system. I am proud to admit how much I have learned on these subjects from our friends Drs. Osler and Fuller ; also from them and many others for the pathological specimens that have been brought before us. As physiologists we take hold of the knowledge thus acquired, and by the careful study of disease, by searching for cause when we find effect, we, in our turn, discover what is the physiological use of these minute parts that the anatomists have shown us to exist, and poor suffering humanity derives the benefit of our united labour in our scientific research. And we, if we have nothing else, have the conscientious conviction that we have done well.

Let me give you an example of what our united labour does. The anatomist discovers a small nerve running in the sheath of each artery, he knows it cannot be there for nothing, it must have a use. The anatomist and physiologist finds that its use is to cause the muscular fibres of the vessel to contract, and thus, as it were, help the heart to propel the blood through the vessels. We take advantage of this fact in the treatment of disease. The medical man finds his patient bleeding to death from hæmorrhage of the lungs or uterus, and gives an hypodermic of ergotine to arrest it, and succeeds ; now there can be no doubt but that the bleeding vessel is thus caused to contract by the direct action of the vaso-motor nerve, which has been acted upon by the ergotine—a medicine having a specific action on the sympathetic nerve, and particularly upon that portion of it we term the vaso-motor nerves. For years the specific action of ergot upon the uterus has been known—long before we knew anything of the vaso-motor nerves—but the physiology of these nerves, I presume, has shown us how it does act, for that it must be through these nerves, is evident from the fact, that the hypodermic of ergotine, arrests hæmorrhage of the lungs just as

rapidly as it does hæmorrhage of the uterus. For my own part, I do not see why it should not also arrest cerebral hæmorrhage, and I mean to try its effect in such a case the first opportunity I have. It certainly should act as rapidly as the application of cold water to the cuticle ; though I do not mean to say that in such a case I would neglect the cold water, at the same time I certainly would try the hypodermic of ergotine. We have lately had a very interesting paper from Dr. Donald Baynes, upon electricity as a therapeutic agent, and I presume that when it arrests hæmorrhage, it is by its action on the vaso-motor nerves. No doubt we have much more yet to learn of this important part of the nervous system, that time with hard study will reveal to us.

You will remember that in one paper I read before you, I described certain symptoms to be found in some cases of insanity, but I did not pretend to account for these symptoms. I told you that if you took hold of both wrists of the patient, one in each hand, feeling the radial arteries with your right and left hands, at the same time, you would find that the pulsation in one wrist came before the other. It was hard to understand how this could be, seeing that the pulsation in each wrist was caused by the heart's action, and should be equal in both. Now I consider we can understand this anomaly when we know the physiology of the vaso-motor nerves. It appears to me easy to comprehend, that in a case of mania there may be irritation in some part of the ganglionic system, causing through the vaso-motor nerves, a more rapid action of the pulse on one side than on the other, or a slower action on one side than on the other. This appears to me to be a feasible way of accounting for an anomaly otherwise incomprehensible.

In papers that I have read from time to time before this society, I have stated that man's mental organization was his inheritance, whether it was good or bad, or good and bad, and that consequently he was not responsible for it. I stated that mind and body were one, and thought was the product of the mind, and under many circumstances involuntary ; that it, thought, was subjective but received food from the objective through the medium of the senses. That the food thus

supplied in childhood and youth, parents and teachers were responsible for ; that the mental food provided in manhood we ourselves were responsible for, because we are free agents and have a free will, and can ourselves choose our mental food. In connection with the fact that mind and body are one, I beg here to express the great pleasure an editorial in the CANADA MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL for February gave me. It is headed "The Curability of Insanity," and recognizes the fact that mind and body are one, in the following sentence : "The organ of the *mind* the *brain*." I say this gave me great pleasure, for, if I am not much mistaken, I was one of the first, on this continent at least, that ever propounded and proved that scientific fact, in a paper read by me before this society, on the 3rd of December, 1875, said paper is published in the *Medical Record* for January, 1876, vol. iv. There were very few at that time to support my views on this question, though very many since ; and some there were would-be moralists, who spoke pretty hard things of me for the views then set forth. However scientific truth always prevails

In some of my papers I have also stated that we could easily account for all the crimes that were daily committed, by remembering what man's mental and moral organization was, and the sort of mental food it was provided with, particularly amongst the poor, and from these facts I drew the conclusion that it was impossible to make laws equally applicable to all persons, under all and every circumstance, and that if society would see crime diminish it must do more to diminish poverty and all its accompanying miseries, provide some more pleasurable objective food for the eye to rest on, if only clean streets and a green tree. And that this would be found a better remedy as a preventive to crime than punishment. I never said that there should not be justice meted out to the true criminal by punishing him ; but I have defined the criminal to be a sane man who committed crime by the consent of his will, for that every man was equal in this respect, that all had a *free will* ; but, unfortunately for society, there are men of bad, as well as "*men of good will*," and whose impulse is stronger than their will.

At various times I stated that I conceived insanity to be an hereditary disease, and that the latent seed was caused to break out in some form of insanity by any exciting cause, and that the chief exciting cause was mental suffering which injured the vital power or nervous force, and that one chief factor of this mental suffering was the present high-pressure system of education. Consequently there could be no system of education applicable to all.

I said I believed in a criminal hereditary neurosis as firmly as I believe in an insane neurosis, with this difference that we all had the criminal neurosis: only some to a greater degree than others. I pointed out the great difficulty there was in diagnosing some cases of insanity, and very frequently it was more difficult to prove a man *sane* than it was to prove a man insane. I have, in my last paper on the Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity spoken to you of the necessity there was for a law of lunacy, and recommended that these views should be brought before the Legislature; and I am pleased to see that the Hon. Mr. Chapleau has moved in the matter in the Local Assembly, and brought in a bill for the more speedy transmission of lunatics into asylums; and I this day had the honor of receiving a letter from the Hon. Mr. Laflamme, Minister of Justice, paying me a very handsome compliment upon my paper on the Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity, and promising me to study up the subject during recess, and be prepared to move in the matter when Parliament again meets. I mention these facts, gentlemen, because I am fully convinced that the attention given to my paper by these honourable gentlemen, is due to the fact that my views were endorsed by the Montreal Medico-Chirurgical Society.

Much stress is laid by some writers as to what constitutes the cure of insanity, some arguing that, should a third, or a fourth attack occur, there has been no cure. This is simply an absurdity. If a medical man treats a patient for pneumonia, pleurisy, peritonitis, or acute rheumatism, and makes a cure, he does not engage that his patient will never have the same disease again; on the contrary, he warns his patient that the same

cause which produced the first attack will likely produce a second. And if, after some months, or years, a second should come, he will not admit that he did not cure his patient in the first instance. And if his patient should happen to be an hospital patient, he will enter him as a new case when he is admitted a second time. At present I have in the asylum at Longue Pointe, two men whom I treated and cured in the asylum at St. Johns. The first was with me four months when I discharged him; he remained well, earning bread for his family for twelve years. He will soon be discharged again. The second is only in the asylum the last five days. When first attacked he remained with me three weeks: I discharged him cured; he remained so for six years, when he got the second attack, during which time he became married a second time, and had a second family. Now, surely I have as good a right to claim a cure in these cases as would a medical man who cured a case of pneumonia. Dr. Howard cured me four different times within ten years, of what he termed bronchitis with the asthma of gouty men. Suppose in time I should get another attack, which is more than probable, and in the end die from an attack, does it follow that he did not cure me in the four first attacks? The fact is, that physically, as well as morally-speaking, we have all some weak points in us that we only discover when it shows itself from some accidental cause. If by the cure of insanity is meant that a person recovering from an attack of insanity will never be subject to a similar attack, then, indeed, there is no case of insanity cured, no more than there is a case of gout, or any other hereditary disease! and it is most true that the number of recoveries under the very best of circumstances, are very few comparatively speaking. For myself, I find that daily the chances are becoming beautifully less.

GENTLEMEN,—Any statement that I have heretofore made before you respecting insanity, and mental and moral science, additional study and experience has not caused me to change my views; and should increased experience cause me to change my views, in the future, I will not be ashamed to tell you so.

In preparing this paper for your consideration, my great

object was to prove to you that the natural and moral laws were perfectly reconcilable ; and that the great cause of poverty, crime, suffering, insanity, other diseases and early death, was the breach of natural laws, either by our progenitors or ourselves. Moreover, that we all had yet very much to learn of both the natural and moral law. In each and all of my papers I have carefully adhered to mental and moral science, as far as these sciences were understood by me, without in any way wishing to *force* my views upon any of you ; although, of course, I should be pleased to convince you of the truth of my views.

I fear that this paper has been rather wearisome, and not as interesting as it might have been made in other hands. However, the subject itself is one of great interest.

I will conclude by expressing my convictions, that if bigotry, prejudice, and fanaticism are ever to be replaced by equitable justice and charity, it must be done through a wide-spread knowledge of mental and moral science.

